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Children's Voices and Voices of Joy

BY
Norman C. Schlichter



BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS

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PS3537
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1922

Made in the United States of America

The Gorham Press, Boston, U. S. A.

AUG 11 1922

©CL.A681349

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TO
MILDRED, BETTY,
ALLAN, AND JOHN,
AND THE "HAPPY ACRES"
THEY ROMP UPON

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THANKSGIVING SONG

For little acts of kindness done,
For thoughts of beauty born,
To blossom all around me in the sun
With each recurring morn,
My heart is singing!

For friendship with its ties of gold
To bind around the soul
And warm our lonely spirits in the cold
To see love's aureole,
My heart is singing!

For a thousand, thousand common things,—
The fountain in my yard,
The dainty colors of canary wings,
The lyrics of a bard,
My heart is singing!

For happy children come to me
Unconscious of my bliss
At finding music in their infancy,
And simple song like this,
My heart is singing!

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE

TRUNDLE-BED TOWN *

Ev'ry man who's under seven
Knows a borough much like heaven,
With four corners snug and small,
Just inside the nursery wall.

All its streets are thro' and thro'
Paved with quiltings red and blue,
And a boulevard of white
Runs along its bolster-site.

Mother is the borough's queen,
But the only ruling seen
Is her taking tax of prayer
Nightly from each res'dent there.

Hushed and still it is by day,
For the dreams are made that way;
What save silence could devise
All the night-time's sweet surprise?

Innocence and Sleep abide
In this town at eventide,
Only men devoid of sin
Having right to enter in.

* Published by permission of *The Youth's Companion*.

Children's Voices and Voices of Joy

Pillows soft and white and fair
Help to answer mother's prayer
That her men rest snug and sound
While the wheels of night go round.

I went up there, years ago,
Ev'ry night, I loved it so;
And I wish I knew the way
Up there still at close of day.

BOY EYES

Boy eyes! Dew eyes!
 Could I forsake?
 Filling with morning,
 Sunshine adorning,
Boy eyes, dew eyes—
 Baby's awake.

Boy eyes! Glad eyes!
 Fine all the day,
 Glowing with pleasure
 Man cannot measure,
Boy eyes, glad eyes—
 Baby's at play.

Boy eyes! Pure eyes!
 No hint of care,
 They look up above
 To angels who love,
Boy eyes, pure eyes—
 Baby's at prayer.

Boy eyes! Tired eyes!
 Dreaming truth-deep,
 Head on the pillow,
 Drooped as the willow,
Boy eyes, tired eyes—
 Baby's asleep.

Boy eyes! Bright eyes!
Joyous and free,
They look into mine
And seem all divine,
Boy eyes, bright eyes—
Love eyes they be.

LINES FOR A BOY'S RILEY BOOK

I'm glad to give this book to one
Who's good and fat and full of fun,
And loves me like a little knight,
In honor true, with all his might.
I wish for him the kindest care
From everybody, everywhere,
And hope that when he is a man,
He'll do for others all he can.
So, little boy, accept this book,
And often on its pages look.

WHERE BABY SLEEPS

The baby sleeps on Pillow Hill,
Just overlooking Cradleville.

It's not a high hill, as you see,
And he can climb it easily.

'Tis near enough to mother's bed
To have her hand upon his head,

And if he makes the weest cry,
Her ear can hear, her aid is nigh.

It is a dainty, dreamy place,
And white and warm as baby's face.

A-riding in on velvet fawns
Here fairies come when evening dawns.

They whisper into baby's ear
The sweetest things a child can hear.

He listens while the hilltop swings
As though 'twere built on golden springs.

But when it stops the place grows dim,
And all the world is dead to him.

He's gone to sleep on Pillow Hill,
Just overlooking Cradleville.

AN EVENING JOURNEY

"I lay me down to sleep," he said,
Then climbed the Hill of Trundle-Bed.

His mother's kiss he took along,
A snow-white brow and heart of song.

He stopped to rest at Blink-a-Blink,
Then journeyed on to Could-not-Think;

One step, and through the Gates of Rest
He entered as a nightgown guest.

His mother told me that's the way
He loves to go once every day.

So she just dresses him in white
And lets him wander off with Night.

I asked her if she did not fear
Lest he some morn might not appear.

"The angels promise me," she said,
"To send him home with morning red."

"Such trust," I said, "so tender, true,
Will always bring him back to you."

GO-TO-BED SONG

Dear Wide-Awake has ridden away
On the fading wings of the dying day,
And left you alone with old Sleepy-Eyes,
A cosy cradle and dream-surprise.

Rockaby high, baby,

Rockaby low;

Rockaby, my baby,

Pure as the snow!

Child-love in your dimples and love in your eyes,
The cosiest cradle, the sweetest surprise!

The soldiers of tin on your doll-baby chairs
Are blinking their eyes and saying their prayers,
While the boys in the picture books, nodding their
heads,

Are wishing for mammas and soft trundle-beds.

Rockaby high, baby,

Rockaby low;

Rockaby, my baby,

Pure as the snow!

Now sleep, and you'll meet 'mong the dream-away
joys,

Your soldiers of tin and your picture book boys!

Ah! down from the fairy shores whiter than milk,
Dream-horses are coming with saddles of silk,
To bear you and Sleepy-Eyes over the sea,
Where all the delights of forgetfulness be!

Rockaby high, baby,
Rockaby low;
Rockaby, my baby,
Pure as the snow!
Now close your eyes tightly, keep hold of his mane,
And the dream-horse will bring you to Mother
again!

CRADLE SONG

The flower-eyelids feel the touch
Of twilight fingers, dear,
And one by one the little stars
Begin to reappear,—
And to thee is the peace of the pillow!

Then rock, my babe, go rocking away
On the crest of the cradle-billow!
Then rock, my babe, go rocking away
Enwrapt in the peace of the pillow.

The breezes blow through dusky aisles
To meet the merry moon;
The wood-doves unto drowsing go,
A-wing with dreamy tune,—
And to thee is the peace of the pillow!

Then rock, my babe, go rocking away
On the crest of the cradle billow!
Then rock, my babe, go rocking away
Enwrapt in the peace of the pillow.

ALICE AND EDITH

Alice, my sweetheart, and Edith, my pet,
They were my darlings—and I love them yet—
When in North Carolina through years very sweet
They lived close beside me upon the same street.

When home I returned from my business or
pleasure,
They gave me their love in the fullest rich
measure.
They kissed me, they hugged me, they called me
fine names;
We romped, and we raced, and we played happy
games.

Once I asked them to tea and they ate with fine
grace,
Their calm, laughing hearts showing clear in each
face.
Now, I think we had rice, Carolina's delight,
And chicken and chocolate and candy more bright.

Next day they both called and told me their
dreams.
As if it just happened so clear it all seems.
They never came singly, but always the pair;
Sweet Alice was lovely, pet Edith as fair.

Alice, my sweetheart, and Edith, my pet,
They were my darlings—and I love them yet—
When in North Carolina through years very sweet
They lived close beside me upon the same street.

ON SEEING A CHILD PRAY

A child at the feet of our Father in heaven
Is kneeling down to pray,
And his Angels wait
At the bedside gate
To bear its words away.

A child at the feet of our Father in heaven!
Two eyes upraised I see,
And the hands a-clasp
In a childish grasp
For heed of Deity.

A child at the feet of our Father in heaven!
Oh, list! for sweet as a rose
Is the simple cry
And the soft "Come nigh,"
That paradiseward goes.

A child at the feet of our Father in heaven!
What tender trust and true
From the baby breast
Of the Angels' guest
Is sweeping through the blue.

The Child in the House

A child at the feet of our Father in heaven!
Would I could claim as they
Of the sinless hand,
In the Mayday land,
The Master's ear to-day!

THE WHITE BOOK

From the French of Auguste Brizeux

With soul and body light I reached sixteen;
My hair like gold upon my brow was seen;
My virgin breast was full of ardor strong;
A thousand joys came temptingly along.

A loving Angel then unto me came,
And on her vestal bosom shone like flame,
With leaves all virgin clean, a book snow white.
“’Tis yours,” said she, “to fill its pages bright.

“Let ne’er a page be blank, but full of zest;
Let year and month and day your work attest;
And may there be no trembling lines of sin
To shame your vision when you look within.

“A calm and sweetly-flowing story write,
Each morn think what the page will hold at night.
When you are old this book a joy will be,
And in your mirror God’s own smile you’ll see.”

ON A CHILD'S PICTURE

Little dear in calico,
How I love you none may know
Save such hearts as leap with joy
At the sight of girl or boy.

I would ask you for a curl
Had I coin of precious pearl,
But, ah me, I fear you'd say,
"No, I cannot sell to-day."

If your lips were not behind
Dainty fingers soft and kind,
I should surely beg a kiss
In my raptures, little miss.

Could your eyes be made to see,
I would shake the Fairy Tree,
Full of apples wrought in gold,
All for children, I am told.

Could you rise and go with me
Over valley, over sea,
I'd provide the tend'rest nurse
In the boundless universe.

But alas! a mother's tears,
Falling through these many years,
Tell me this will never be,
Little angel, Emily.

CHRISTMAS SONG FOR A CHILD

I will open two lips of purity
And carol the morning through
To the praise of the Babe of Bethlehem,
Who silvers the Christmas dew.
 To the Babe of Love,
 To the Babe above,
To the Babe who will my Saviour be
I will sing through lips of purity.

With two little lips by youth made mild
I will sing a sweet song for the dear Christ-Child!

I will hold high two hands of purity
And pledge each spotless palm,
To the side of the Babe of Bethlehem,
Who sweetens the Christmas calm.
 To the Babe of Love,
 To the Babe above,
To the Babe who will my Saviour be
I will pledge two hands of purity!

With two little hands by youth made mild
I will pledge my soul to the dear Christ-Child!

I will bend low two knees of purity
And offer myself to-day,
To the work of the Babe of Bethlehem,
Who sees me at Christmas play.

Children's Voices and Voices of Joy

To the Babe of Love,
To the Babe above,
To the Babe who will my Saviour be
I will offer a life of purity.

My one little life by youth made mild
I will yield to the arms of the dear Christ-Child!

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the fairest day
That dawns for man,
And eyes of children are its brightest light.
'Tis beauteous plan.

It has been so since Jesus came
To Bethlehem.
His eyes betokened first to Mary there
God's diadem.

CHRISTMAS

From the French of Gautier

The sky is black, the earth is white;
Bells carol, praise bestowing!
Jesus is born;—the Virgin bright
On him her smile is throwing.

No festooned curtains are upborne
To keep the child from freezing;
Thin spider-webs alone adorn
The stable roof displeasing.

The dear child Jesus trembles sore,
For few are they who love him;
To warm him in his cradle poor
The cattle breathe above him.

Above the roof from parted sky
White snowflakes thick are falling,
Glad angels white to shepherds nigh
Are "Christmas! Christmas!" calling.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

Give the children playthings,
Let them make a noise,
Mindful every minute
They are girls and boys.

Do not weep before them,
Do not fret or frown;
Keep them laughing round you,
Keep their troubles down.

Every happy childhood
Is a comfort vast
In the grown-up sorrows
When the years run fast.

CHILD THOUGHTS

THE KINGDOM OF THE BOO DARK NIGHT

I know an ugly kingdom wide
Where I'm afraid to go.
I cuddle up at thought of it
Beneath the covers, oh!

It's down beyond the hallway there,
Outside the big front door,
And everything is black and black
'Cept now and then a store.

If I should travel there alone
Just once, now mind, it's true,
My brother says I'd see a king
They call the Bug-a-boo.

He's higher than the trees, he says,
And both his fists are double,
And all he ever thinks about
Is making children trouble.

He runs whene'er our mammas come,
Of papas too, he's 'fraid,
And so when I was out with them,
Behind the clouds he stayed.

If I should be a mamma now,
I'd try to catch and fight
This nasty, goblin kind of king
Out in the boo-dark night.

A CHILD HERO

When I sit down with pa and ma
To take my evening tea,
I try to be the finest boy
That ever you did see.

I bow my head till grace is said,
Then use a fork until
My mamma says, "Now, use a spoon
Else something you may spill."

I gladly do just as she says,
For spoons are more becoming
To one who reads from picture charts
And can't do any summing.

Sometimes if things are salted so
I do not like the taste,
I take an extra drink or two
And let none go to waste.

Child Thoughts

And if I cannot cut my pie,
I do not cry nor hollo,
I wait until it's cut for me
Before I get a swallow.

Sometimes desserts are made so good
That I get full of wishes,
But not a wish do I e'er tell,
For fear I'd get two dishes.

Now, ain't I good for doing this?
My mamma thinks I am,
For ev'ry night she kisses me
And calls me, Little Lamb.

OUR SOFA

We have a sofa green and blue,
That's prettier than me or you;
It's in the parlor still and fine,
Untouched except by Emmeline.

She is my sister, old and tall.
She owns the sofa, owns it all,
And never once in all the year
Dare I go even halfway near.

She says I have my little chair,
And like a good girl should stay there;
But every now and then I cry
'Cause I must pass the sofa by.

I think my sister ought to be
Ashamed that she's so cruel to me,
For only once since I do sums
Did I have sticky hands and thumbs.

BOYLIKE

I love my teacher just enough.
I would not love her more,
Lest sometime she might call me back
When I go out the door.

STARS

I think the stars too little are
To carry lamps with light;
Now would n't it be dreadful
If they'd stumble in the night
And burn each other, oh, so bad
No stars would evermore be had!

SLATES

I love my slate the best of all
The things I have both great and small,
And I am wishing, o'er and o'er,
Our roof of slate would be a floor.

A WICKED THOUGHT

I have a dress that's all of silk;
It is the color of the milk;
And I would wear it every day,
If my mamma were far away.

A CALL TO ARMS

If I should lose my animals
Some night from Noah's ark,
I'd have to get my soldiers brave
To hunt them in the dark.

A CHILD'S PRAYER

When I put my playthings by,
Father, guide me with thine eye;
When I, tired, creep to bed,
Put thy hands upon my head.

Thou art not afraid by night,
For thou mad'st both dark and light,
And I trust thy keeping sure
While the silences endure.

While I rest on pillows soft,
Peep betimes within the loft
Where my pretty bunnies dwell,
Meekly hoping all is well.

Let the star thou lovest best
Shine upon the faithful breast
Of my doggy, Commodore,
Watching on Balcony Shore.

Guard my Playroom Kingdom all,
'Specially my top and ball,
For as soon as I awake,
These two knights my pleasure make.

Child Thoughts

Keep my marbles every one;
Do not let the sand-mill run;
Keep the pages in my books;
Save my soldiers from the spooks.

These requests I make in love;
Hear them so, dear One above,
And when morning lights the skies,
Give me back my open eyes.

AN AMERICAN'S WEALTH *

I have two little kittens,
I have two little socks,
I have two little mittens,
I have some colored chalks.

I have a lovely brother,
I have a pa and ma,
I have a sled and other
Things that both my aunties saw.

I have a broken dolly,
Who's often sick in bed,
I have a talking polly
With a very colored head.

I have two golden fishes,
Who swim, but cannot run;
I have a dozen wishes
That always wish for fun.

* Published by permission of the *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia.

VOICES OF JOY

YOUR EYES

To E. W. S.

The light within your loving eyes
Has all the wonder and surprise
Of Spring which gathers slow and wide
By Susquehanna's southern tide.

All those who mingle year by year
With this same Spring, who chance to hear
This praise and know it very true,
Will feel a thousand envyings of you.

But you, who also know so well
This Spring's unmatched miracle,
Will blush and modestly disclaim
Your eyes' deserved incomparable fame.

LYRICS OF THORNHILL

I

"A THORNHILL ROSE IS A ROSE INDEED"

A Thornhill rose is a rose indeed,
And perfect every flower,
For the wind and the sun
And the sun and the wind
Caress them by the hour.

A Thornhill wind is a wind indeed;
The village lieth high,
And the bold wind and the tame wind,
The tame wind and the bold,
Blow out of the Thornhill sky.

The Thornhill folk are folk indeed,
And Thornhill folk are good,
For the hush and the peace
And the peace and the hush
Enkindle brotherhood.

II

"HAVE YOU HEARD THE THORNHILL MUSIC?"

Have you heard the Thornhill music,
Have you heard the Thornhill song,
From the happy throng

Voices of Joy

Of birds in silent hedges,
In fragrant flower ledges,
In elfin meadow edges?

Have you seen the Thornhill wonder?
Have you seen the Thornhill gleam?
Like a lovely dream,
It is ancient, it is olden;
It is shining, it is golden;
It is all sure fairy-molten.

You can hear it, you can see it,
If you comrade with the pines,
With the pines, the pines.
There is music, there is wonder,
Glory in, and o'er, and under,
And around the peaceful pines.

III

“FOUR CHURCHES STAND TO QUICKEN GRACE”

Four churches stand to quicken grace
In Thornhill hearts, and make a holy place
For men to dwell. 'T would easy seem
To honor Deity and dream
Of Him, His beauty, and His thought,
By which are rapturously wrought
Thornhill flowers and Thornhill birds,
And the palpitant, lovely words
Which the enamored wind doth bring
Up from the meadow every spring.

IV

THE BRIDGE

Who takes the road to Thornhill,
Through Thornhill to the bridge
Which spans the lush, green meadow,
Sloping lazy from the ridge,
Will gaze and gaze in rapture
And a peace undreamed of capture:

By the gentle flowing stream,
By the burning golden gleam
Of the helmets of the corn,
Marching down to greet the morn,
With three pine trees in command
Of the column green and grand.

By the troops of cornflowers blue,
Resting arms amid the dew;
By the silver-waving willows,
Like far glorious ocean billows,
Rolling onward with the wind
Toward the shores of distant Ind.

By the grain in golden shock,
Holding comfort for the stock
When winter blows; and harvest white
For man's desire and delight.
By trim white farmhouse crowning clear
The greenest pasture of the year.

Voices of Joy

By the eager hurried greed
Of a tired and thirsty steed
For the water pure and bright,
Gravel-cleansed by day and night.
By the graceful cattle herd,
Drifting, swaying, all unheard.
O'er the meadow do they ply,
Like a leisure cloud on high.

By sure music, stately, loud,
Of the giant live oaks proud,
When winds blow high adown the ridge,
Straight across the listening bridge.
By blended wine of wind and sun,
Full plentiful for every one
Who patient with the bridge will share
The lazy, languid August air.

By the cozy toilers' cot,
Where the simple solemn thought
Of their God ennobles all;
By the robins' cheery call.

I gaze, and gaze in rapture,
And a peace undreamed of capture
When I take the road to Thornhill,
Through Thornhill to the bridge
Which spans the matchless meadow,
Sweeping glorious from the ridge.

Children's Voices and Voices of Joy

V

"I'VE LEFT MY HEART IN THORNHILL"

I've left my heart in Thornhill,
So I shall sure return
When ironweed lights the roadway
And brighter blossoms burn.

I'll hurry into John Street
To where it comes a road,
And when I reach the meadow,
I'll find my heart's abode.

Oh, come with me to Thornhill,
Unutterably fair,
And be a guest of Beauty,
With sunshine everywhere!

VI

MEMORY

I've left fair babes in Thornhill,
And I am far away;
But I can hear their laughter,
And I can see them play.

Voices of Joy

For, oh, my heart adores them
And memory plays me fair,
And I am still companioning
The darlings everywhere.

What wondrous little journeys
Down John Street did we share,
My blue-eyed Mildred matching
All delicate beauties there!

When now she goes to John Street,
If she will look behind,
A partner on each journey
The blessed child will find.

When Betty goes a-playing
With Mildred or a pet,
I see her gold hair flying,
For I am with her yet.

I've left fair babes in Thornhill,
And I am far away;
But I can hear their laughter,
And I can see them play.

THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER AT HARRISBURG

Here mountains part to let the river roll
Eternal toward its salt tumultuous goal;
The animated beauties of its tide
A special happy splendor here provide;
And here the river seems to laugh out story
Of all its previous perfect path of glory
As if it knew there might be vast delight
Within these mountains at the lovely sight;
Then graceful bending, beauty-set, it flows,
Flows on with sweet enchantment and repose.

NOVEMBER CHRYSANTHEMUMS IN A SOUTHERN MILL VILLAGE

Here where men and women toil to clothe their
kind,
And oftenest with smiles, for they are honest and
have thought of God,
They all love flowers and can tell their ways
unto each season's end.

I've seen the hands that finger threads upon their
looms
So delicately and yet so sure, display an even finer
touch
Upon these gentle and enrapturing blossoms pure,

Voices of Joy

(A million petals posed in bright patterns as of
Paradise)

Both now in all their fullest glory showing,
And while their gracious God was weaving them
from day to day

'Mid sun and shower, in His heart their beauty
knowing.

FOR PEACE—THROUGH ALL THE YEAR

For peace, on spring's fair day,
To follow birds and stray
Bright blossoming meadows o'er.
For peace, just this, no more.

For peace, on summer day,
To join a child at play
Upon a sandy shore.
For peace, just this, no more.

For peace, on autumn day,
To fondle leaves full gay
That fall about my door.
For peace, just this, no more.

For peace, on winter day,
To burn a log, and pray,
And meditate love's store.
For peace, just this, no more.

WHEN THE SEA IS CALM

Low-breathing bells, with a gull's salute,
And a cloistered coral whispery
Of Thee, of Thee,
Repose within salt-tuned strings
And sound in the waves of a quiet sea
For me, for me.

FIREFLIES

From a land of elfin wonder,
With fraternal beacons bright,
Lo, the messengers of magic
To the inner sense of night!

NORTHERN AUTUMN

The wrinkled veins of the aging leaf
Are at their tremolo,
And all the griefs of a forced good-by
The avian senses know.

SCIOTO HILLS, OHIO, MID-DECEMBER

In fine contrasting curving grace
And delicate sweep of rounded slope
These hills climactic beauty have.
And Night hath sprinkled lightly down
An even covering of snow,
Which seems divinely spread
To quicken the beholder's sense
Of loveliness and perfect form.

A THOUGHT IN CHARLESTON, WEST
VIRGINIA

Though mountains that surround are not so high,
Yet perfect rampart 'gainst the fine far sky
Of average place where men abide
Are they, and thus effectually they hide
The glow of setting sun's last beauties bright
And every dawning day's new first delight.
And so I think each far and flaming star
Must have a consolation vaster far
For Charleston folk than commonly for those who
see
The first of dawn's, the last of day's, fine ecstasy.

OPEN SKIES

When I behold the open skies,
Straightway I claim them as my prize,
Because their blueness silently
Restores the dying faith in me.

For they have trusted ages through
The One who made me, me; you, you,
Though thunders stirred and mists bedimmed
And left them all unseraphimed.

Nor have they murmured in their stress,
Nor spoken aught but "Blessedness:
To lie here patiently in pain
And test His wondrous love again."

When I behold the open skies,
Straightway I claim them as my prize,
For their example silently
Restores the dying faith in me.

MOUNTAIN MINISTRY

I see the purple mountains lying
In far long ranges 'neath the wintry sun,
And in their soft unusual muteness
I feel a comfort when the day is done.

Voices of Joy

In all their high unchanging calmness
I feel renewal of our Father's rest,
And know that when these surging days are over,
In perfect peace He'll fold us to His breast.

EARLY MARCH IN CHARLESTON

Warm is the color and happy the pose
Of every glorious Charleston rose,
Sweet are the hyacinths down at one's feet,
Breathing a welcome to all whom they meet.

Even the ocean relentless and stern
Seems to slacken its will, and to yearn
To be quiet, and ministrant once and for aye
To the fiery daffodils lighting the day.

If Charleston is ever like this, let me stay,
After hasting to summon forever away
From the Northern clime now so barren and chill
The friends of my heart here their loves to fulfill.

FROST FINGERS

The fingers on the hand of Frost
Subserve artistic sense,
And every morn that harbors him
Gets frescoed recompense.

OLD OCEAN

Lo, soft saline orchestrals roll
In old triumphant tones,
And rouse in me the rhythmic lore
Of long-lost primal zones.

WHEN RAIN WINDS BLOW

Just a little aching absence,
Just a little ashen gloom,
With a breath of numbing odor
From an olden, open tomb,
Seems to settle firm and low
In my soul when rain winds blow.

Just a little happy loving,
Just a little blissful joy,
With a restful recollection
Of the free heart of a boy,
Seems to vaporize and go
From my soul when rain winds blow.

Just enough of blessings vanish
As will give the cares a place,
For the soul of only sweetness
Might forget the fond, true Face.
Purposeful this plan, I know
In my soul when rain winds blow.

NOVEMBER IN CHICAGO

I left bright roses in the sun
In Carolina fair,
(Snow-white, and yellow, red, and pink)
I had to leave them there;
For I must dwell in other clime
And with new blossoms count my time.

Now wind is chill, and flowers dead,
And days of sunshine rare,
While my sweet roses blossom bright
In Carolina fair.
My fine new flowers all are dead.
Of Love I must be comforted.

DAY AND NIGHT

Welcome, peace-encompassed night!
Welcome, dawn of blessed light!

Both are givers unto man
On a universal plan.

Who may prove which giveth best?
Light hath duty, night hath rest.

A LITTLE ROOM IN THE CITY

Ten feet by ten is more than size
Of all the sky that greets mine eyes
In terms of common measure;
But looking, well content am I,
I measure it with memory
And stretch the soft blue treasure.

Ten feet by ten becomes a mile,
And on I journey till I smile,
And yet there is no ending.
With so much sky above my head,
The room's a land; a town, my bed,
I'm easily pretending.

And so I measure other things.
They grow so large my heart just sings,
And I am ne'er complaining.
Some men would say I dwell in gloom,
But many sigh for this small room
And joys that I am gaining.

MARCH DAFFODILS IN CHARLESTON

You warm my heart expectant still
Of wintry frost and chill,
Too harsh for tender eyes like thine
To flash their secrets into mine.

Why are you blest to greet the world
So long before unfurled
Your northern kin of equal blaze
Bestow like glories to our gaze?

And do you nod especially sweet
To Northerners you meet,
To help them treasure the surprise
Of light on unexpectant eyes?

I gaze, and think you mean to tell
True answers; but, ah, well
I know, if speech you knew, 't would be
Too perfect for humanity.

“COME BACK, O SPIRIT OF THE MILD
CONTENT”

Come back, O Spirit of the mild content,
And breathe on me anew. I've held the hand
Of grief too long; too far into her land
I've come defeated and without dissent,
Till now no more thy magic ravishment
Hath place to leap and fall within my breast
And cheer, as fairy streamlets moss-caressed
Do sweet wild things whose blood some drouth hath
 spent;
Till I am blind to fancy, deaf to all
The old consoling sounds of those glad hours
When music filled my soul. O Spirit, fly
Unto my need. Cut short this bitter thrall
And help me find again my long-lost powers
To voice the beauties of the earth and sky.

JUNE

From the French of Coppée

In life where we but few years see,
The sure instinct of birds and men
To build a nest will always be.

A humble roof of straw and clay
To warm their families and their love,
All wish to build some happy day.

By maiden eyes my heart deep wrought,
Of secret and exclusive joy
This tender hope I too have caught.

I dreamed with joy I built my nest,
But then a furious storm-wind came
And overthrew my plannings blest.

As eggs that fall to earth from a tree,
Upon my solitary way
My broken hopes I sadly see.

OF PEACH TREES BLOOMING VERY
EARLY

In glorious garments they display
Their bright contagious hopes to-day;
And the souls of all who see
Are ennobled mightily.

The warm earth and the loving sun
Rejoice upon their triumph won,
And Beauty's perfect eyes
Moisten with their rhapsodies.

I glory in the sacred sight;
At noon, full heavenly is their light.
Yet I feel a vague despair
From a sighing in the air.

The innocent glory may have come too soon
Under a false ill-fated moon;
And a jealous wind, and proud,
May weave for each hope its dismal shroud.

SUMMER WHITE-CAPS

White lips come up all over the lake
Snow-white, and white as death,
To sip from the mellow friendly wind
Its soft sustaining breath.

They chatter with each other very gay,
For the wind is full and fair,
And the sun is kissing the pure white lips
Quite tenderly everywhere.

THE PINES

I have tarried in the bosom of the pines
And they asked me of my grief,
Thinking they might have relief
For my pain.
So I told them how it came
And I gently called her name.
But the music that is theirs,
Like a whisper on the stairs
In a palace old and lonely and forgot,
Sweet and low, and artist-wrought,
Changed to chanting with a sigh
For the one who had to die.
And I had a sweet relief
Of my ever-burning grief
From the music in the bosom of the pines;
From the music of the sympathetic pines.

Children's Voices and Voices of Joy

Oh, the music in the bosom of the pines!
I shall hold them fast; and tell
All the syllables that fell
In my heart
When I next am asked to share
With another heavy care,
Or his sorrow, or his woe,
If he cannot swiftly go
For the comfort in the bosom of the pines.
Oh, the chanting with a sigh
For my love who had to die!—
All the syllables are pure,
All the syllables endure,
Which I heard within the bosom of the pines!

AFTER READING ARCHIBALD LAMP-
MAN'S POEMS

Sometimes it seems that thou hast sung all songs
Which one could ever care to sing, so whole,
So splendid, nature-fed, thy grasp of soul.
To thee the honor of thy land belongs,
O minstrel of the millet and the lake,
Whose spirit fine I would the world could take
And make its own. Then nature's perfectness
Would get her God-planned chance to teach and
 bless;

For men would have the inner sight to see,
The open heart to feel her meaning imagery.

Let us go on who have begun to learn
Like this fond fellow of the sun, the ways
Of bird and stream, the wholesome joy of days
Amid the flowers and the bees; to yearn
For conscience that shall be full clear beside
Great troops of lilies fair, all satisfied
With what their Maker, who is wise, hath given;
Or in the presence of the grass hard driven
By thoughtless winds, that shows in every blade
A sweet simplicity of heart both sure and staid.

Alas, that thou has left us in thy prime,
O Lampman, leader great and true! we need
Thee who are weaklings of old fancy's breed
To give us courage for the things sublime;
We need to put our hands in thine and mount
To heights where masks are laid aside, where count
No more the foolish foibles we have heard
Among self-centred men. Alas, no word
From thee will come again! And we are lost
And fatherless mid beauty, silence, and the frost.

THE OPEN HILL

Sometimes the city makes me glad,
Sometimes her joy can thrill;
But oh, 't is not the joy I had
Upon the open hill.

To sit upon a robe of grass,
See morning come with song
Outpouring from the birds that pass
In gay familiar throng;

To read at noon a message bright
Unto one's busy soul,
From out the long, long lines of light
That back and forward roll;

Voices of Joy

To rise from off the sunny lea,
And, mounting up at will,
The master of yourself to be
Upon the open hill;

Ah, these are joys we never know
Who, by our fate compelled,
Must up and down a city go,
In streets be ever held.

We have our pomp, our wisdom true;
Our music, arts, and fames;
But open hills and stars and dew
To us are only names.

A broken reed my heart would be
Could I not think me still
Of early days God gave to me
Upon an open hill.

THE WISE WORD, THE TRUE WORD

He has the wise word, he has the true word
Of solace, or joy,
Who hears the great Voice in the wind,
Who lists the soft Voice in the rain
Of late April days,
When Spring is in the white heat
Of her marvelous conjuring.

He has the wise word, he has the true word
Of solace, or joy,
Who sees the dim sprites in the woods
At autumn tide,
Full fairy-some, groping in the soft haze
After sweet dreams almost melodious
In their felt silences.

He has the wise word, he has the true word
Of solace, or joy,
Whose heart is lighted by the bright stars;
Who anguishes with a breaking wave
On a lonely shore;
Who reads the wide high skies to find
Eternal truth for humankind.

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